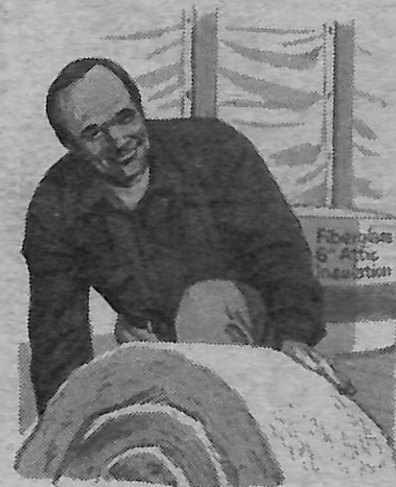


Our 1982 HOME & GARDEN ISSUE



HOME IMPROVE



"I'm Definitely One Of Them..."

A Test To Discover If You Hate Spring Cleaning

BY JEANNE HOFMANN

There are some of us who cry bitter tears when the last patch of snow in the yard melts away - and it's not because we ski or love winter's beauty best. It is because we **hate** spring cleaning. We have been trying for years to work up some seasonal enthusiasm for this chore, but nothing works.

Some of you out there will never understand our agony. So many of you seem to get right into the spruce-up spirit without any struggle at all. You know who you are: you're the ones who take vacations from work to clean the attic or paint the house. This column is definitely not for you. Some folks are borderline cases. It isn't for them either. This is for the down and out chore haters of the world.

Here is a brief test to help you decide if you're one of us (in case you're not quite sure.) The following are housekeeping hints taken from various "household helper" idea books. If you would consider **even for a minute**, doing a **single one**, you **don't** belong in our group:

1. Vacuum the rock garden to get rid of last year's leaves.
2. Cut the terry linings from old shower caps to recycle as dust cloths.
3. Keep a stapler in the kitchen to staple potato chip and cookie bags shut between snacks.

4. Light a candle and burn all the white fuzzies off every dandelion in your yard, so they won't spread.
5. Clean the grooves on your electric mixer cord with a soapy toothpick.

The Ten Best Hints

Now, for all of us who could never do any of the above, there are other kinds of hints we can share. Here are the ten best for this year:

1. Put a floor length tablecloth on at least one large table. When unexpected guests drive up, grab all the clutter and throw it under that table. (WARNING: This only works if no toddlers are among your company.)
2. Get your kids interested in nature study. When you notice someone's eyes straying to the cobwebs on the ceiling say, "Oh that's Charlotte - she's Bobby's science project this month."
3. Set up a stepladder by the picture window, with a rag draped on the top rung. Anyone who drops in will assume he or she has interrupted you at washing windows.
4. Get a dog, so you can blame the beat up furniture and rugs on him.
5. Clean one room really well. Take all the stuff you can't bear to throw away into another room with a door you can lock, and then entertain guests in the clean room.

6. Blame all wallpaper spots and cracked plaster on the previous tenants. (NOTE: This one's only good for five years.)

7. Put your arm in a cast each spring.
8. Buy an exotic foreign vacuum cleaner. When your company trips over the dust balls, tell them it's broken and you're waiting for parts from Peking.
9. When you run out of room for dirty dishes in the dishwasher, good emergency alternatives include the oven, the hall closet, and the laundry hamper.
10. Get your blackened roaster really clean by baking apples in it and giving the whole thing to your neatest neighbors. The pan is guaranteed to come back spotless - even if they have to use a blow torch on it!

If there are any neat housekeepers stalwart enough to have read this far, here are some earnest pleas to you from the rest of us: PLEASE don't vacuum your eavestroughs too often...PLEASE leave a few weeds in your garden...PLEASE don't iron in front of your picture window...PLEASE mop your driveway only **after** dark. Don't worry about what your neighbors will think. Lots of us with guilty little secrets will be jumping with joy not to have to face perfection across the street! Happy Spring.

Suggestions On Battling Gypsy Moth

APPLIED CONTROL:

The gypsy moth is a very hardy pest. Dormant sprays of superior oil as commonly recommended for insect control (i.e. 2-3 gal/100 gal water) will not kill the eggs. Creosote applied by brush is effective for egg kill, but care should be used not to let an excess soak into the tree bark since it will kill whatever living tissue it touches. Scraping eggs off the bark and allowing them to remain on the ground will not kill the eggs. Usually so few eggs can be killed by any manual method that in heavy infestations this egg killing will still not prevent tree-defoliation. There will always be many eggs that are missed and small caterpillars may also be blown in by the wind. Rubbing, wire brushing, hammer-

ing, scraping, often result in only limited egg control and burning with a propane torch often does more harm to the tree bark than the caterpillars would do. None of the manual methods are practical in tall trees. Routinely, the larger caterpillars (4th instar) crawl down the tree trunk during the day and crawl back up again at night. This allows some of them to be captured if folded burlap is wrapped around the tree trunk for a trapping place. This may help, particularly in light infestations, but the benefit may be chiefly psychological. The caterpillars often wander about prior to pupation. It is at this time that they crawl onto and/or into homes, creating an extensive nuisance. It is too late then to do anything for control but battle them with a broom as a matter of good housekeeping.

If local control is desired, there are spray materials which can be applied to the caterpillars between mid-May and mid-June. The larger they become the harder they are to kill.

NATURAL CONTROL OR NON-CHEMICAL TREATMENT:

Gypsy moth eggs are very resistant to cold and temperatures of minus 15-25° F. are required to kill them. The eggs are also very resistant to heat. Therefore, the eggs must be burned rather than scorched to be sure they are dead from exposure to this treatment. Intensive efforts have been made to establish introduced parasites in this country and several species are presently busily at work. Predaceous beetles are also well established in the United States and likewise, a lethal polyhedral virus is usually present. This virus causes the disease that brings about a population collapse. These agents eventually help to suppress an outbreak of gypsy moth.

Some insecticides which are registered for gypsy moth control are:

CARBARYL (Sevin), a methyl carbamate type insecticide which is registered for use on many kinds of fruit, vegetable and ornamental plants. Spray deposits are lethal to insects for about five days. It is useful against many kinds of insects, including caterpillars, lacebugs, periodical cicada, earwigs, some scale crawlers, some aphids and some leaf miners. It is particularly effective against Japanese beetle adults, elm leaf beetle, and birch leaf miner. It is very toxic to honeybees and application to blossoms, particularly white clover and linden, should be avoided. Carbaryl produces severe injury or death to Boston ivy and Virginia creeper. Repeated applications thereon may also contribute to a buildup of mites and should be avoided.

Carbaryl is available as a liquid suspension or wettable powder. If used, beekeepers nearby, should be forewarned so that hive openings may be screened appropriately for a few hours so as to alleviate the hazard of beehive contamination.

ACEPHATE (Orthene), an organic phosphate-type insecticide, is registered for use and is effective against a very wide range of insects on vegetables, ornamentals and flowers. It has low volatility which extends the time it remains lethal to insects. This period is 10 to 15 days. It is available as a 75 percent crystalline powder.

BACILLUS THURINGIENSIS (BT) is a microbial insecticide that is non-toxic and non-pathogenic to man and warm blooded animals, fish, and honeybees, but it is capable of inducing fatal disease in certain insects, mostly caterpillars. On the basis of evidence to date, this bacillus is harmless to parasitic and predatory insects and other forms of life. It is useful against such insects as gypsy moth, cankerworm, fall webworm, elm spanworm, and linden looper. Also, it gives some control of tent caterpillar. Occasionally, it gives erratic performance. Two applications are required. It must be applied near or during the second instar stage of the gypsy moth caterpillar development which is usually about May 20, in most of Massachusetts. All caterpillars do not hatch at exactly the same time and therefore all of them do not reach the second instar stage at the same time so a second application is required about June 1 for complete control. Even then more caterpillars are likely to survive as compared to chemical application.

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Some Books & Tips On Home Improvement

By Jeanne Hoffman

In 1970, Bert Bacharach wrote a book telling **How To Do Almost Everything** that became an instant success. Last year, Mary Ellen Pickham made the best sellers list with her **Best Of Helpful Hints**.

What makes these collections of household advice so popular? Maybe the answer is that they fill a special need for everyone who is trying to maintain homes and gardens. Obviously, we want to find inexpensive ways to solve the myriad problems of upkeep. But we also need to squeeze as much fun out of the chores as possible.

There is happy inspiration in discovering tips like this one: "You can give evergreens a healthier, greener glow by watering the earth at the base of the trees with beer! So now we're all set if we have a languishing landscape - we can throw a party, and save the leftovers for the shrubbery. Here are some more innovative ways to tackle boring old problems, gleaned from Bert and Mary Ellen:

INSIDE THE HOUSE - Store out of season clothes in large lidded trash cans to keep them dry and moth-proofed. Hide nail holes by rubbing toothpaste into the hole and rubbing it smooth with a damp sponge. Sprinkle rugs with salt before vacuuming to brighten them up and help discourage moths.

After washed windows are dried, rub a clean blackboard eraser over them for a good shine. Water your plants with water you've boiled eggs in, or with stale club soda. Give your favorite houseplant a shot of Geritol on a regular basis for three months to encourage new leaves and growth. Immobilize a bee or wasp that gets into your home with hair spray. If it stings you, ease the pain by applying a fresh cut raw onion to the sting.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - Store circular saw blades in the envelopes of old record albums. Use petroleum jelly to keep outdoor light bulbs from corroding by putting a light covering of jelly on the threads of the bulbs. Remove old bumper stickers with nail polish remover and with gentle scraping with a razor blade.

Prevent rust on tools by putting a piece of charcoal, chalk or several moth balls in the tool box. Help make birds nesting easier by collecting lint from your dryer, yarn from your handiwork, and hair from your brush, then fasten them lightly to a tree branch. Attract more birds to your birdbath by dropping a few colored marbles in it.

For more ideas on coping with potential trouble spots, there is a handy number for you at the Public Library: **640**. That is the Dewey decimal number for household solving. Incidentally, you are in the best of poetic company if such troubles plague you.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wryly stated that "...a man's house is his master, and a task for life. He must furnish it, show it, and keep it in repair the rest of his days."

So, if MacBeth's words, "Out, damned spot" apply more to your couch than your conscience, come to the Public Library and find a solution that won't leave you wringing your hands in despair!



In addition to mothballs, place whole cloves in pockets of woolen coats or in bags of sweaters for winter storage. Helps prevent moth damage and adds a nice spicy fragrance.

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Be Aware Of Pesticide Laws

The public should be aware of several requirements concerning pesticide applications to control gypsy moths and other outdoor nuisance insects, according to the Pesticide Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture.

Homeowners are urged to ask to see a copy of the appropriate license or certification document before contracting for any application of pesticides. This is one way to ensure that the person hired is qualified to apply pesticides.

All commercial pesticide applicators must maintain either a commercial applicator's license which allows use of "general use" pesticides, or commercial certification, which allows use of both general use pesticides and "restricted use" pesticides.

In addition, State Law requires that those licensed or certified to apply pesticides be covered by liability insurance, which provides homeowners with protection in the event of an accident.

Those persons found lacking proper and valid certification or license are subject to criminal and civil penalties set forth in Section 14 of Chapter 132B of the General Laws.

Bureau regulations as set forth by law also require that applicators operate in a careful manner and only when conditions are proper for controlling pests in the locality. The Department's position relative to enforcement of this regulation is as follows.

1. Applicators should notify the immediate residents prior to beginning application of pesticides. If there is potential for material to drift through doors, open windows, etc., applicators should take steps necessary to keep this from happening. This may include (1) asking homeowners, and if necessary neighbors, to close windows and (2) advising residents not to enter the spray area during application.

2. Applicators should make themselves aware of any areas around the home and adjacent properties which should be avoided, including vegetable gardens, swimming pools, bird baths, children's toys and play areas and pets. Many insecticides are especially toxic to bees and may have special precautionary statements on the label. The applicator should determine if there are bee hives or actively foraging bees in the area of application and take appropriate measures in accordance with labeling precautions.

3. Applicators should be aware of winds and other weather conditions that will increase pesticide drift from the target site. Applicators should discontinue applications when these conditions may result in significant drift of pesticides onto the sensitive areas as described above.

4. Regulations prohibit the application of any pesticide in a manner inconsistent with its labeling or other restrictions imposed by the Department, Board or Subcommittee. Applicators should thoroughly study the labeling of any product they intend to use to ensure proper application.

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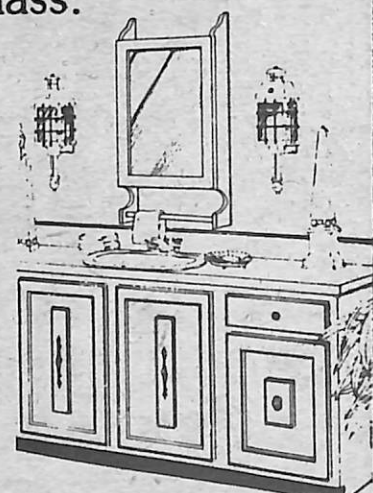
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A Little Imagination Can Make Your Bedroom Special

All you really need is imagination. You can make your bedroom a very special room in your home or apartment even if it suffers from a severe but not fatal architectural dilemma.

Wallcovering plays a vital role in solving frustrating decorating problems such as a high ceiling or a room just too large for warmth and comfort.

The bedroom above has a high ceiling. Visually cold and unattractive, it was transformed to a warm room.

The initial step in this transformation was the choice of wallcovering. The diamond pattern column design not only gives the appearance of lowering the ceiling but provides the design foundation to build on throughout the room.

This diamond pattern, with its texture-like appearance, is carried out on the bed base, the headboard and hallway. This gives the room unity with possibilities for contrast and coordination.

The darker-colored carpet is used to soften and warm the room, providing continuity without confusion.

With the fundamental steps accomplished, wallcovering and carpet chosen, now is the time to add those touches that will make the bedroom functional and individualized.

Note the track lighting is much lower than the high ceiling, adding to the appearance of a lowered ceiling. Not only does it provide easy reading in bed but presents a soft, intimate tone throughout this room. A shelf built above the track is the perfect setting for plants or books, as is the headboard.

Unity, coordination, balance and innovation are part of designing a room with its own (and your own) personality. This bedroom, with the right choice of wallcovering to set stage, is a perfect example.



THIS BEDROOM, after using a bit of imagination and wallcovering is pretty as a picture. Many of your local wallpaper outlets, such as the WALLPAPER WAREHOUSE on Walnut Street Extension can help turn your bedroom into something imaginative - and also something you can be proud of. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

Strawflowers: Annuals To Perennials

By Dorine Kubik

Strawflowers are annuals in your garden, but will last several years in your home if they are picked and prepared at the right time.

Pick strawflowers before the blossoms are fully opened as you do not want to expose the centers. Cut the stem at the bottom of the flower and replace it with straight green floral wire that can be purchased at craft stores. As the flower dries, it will tighten on the wire. Keep the wired flowers upright in a container in a dry area in your home until they are ready to be used in dried arrangements.

During the growing season, three or four flowers will appear in your garden each day ready to be picked. If you do not have the time to wire the flowers immediately, you can keep them in your refrigerator for a few hours.

To raise strawflowers, you can either buy the plants or start them from seeds. You can buy trays of strawflowers at some of our local garden centers. Don't be discouraged when you see the plant's unattractive foliage because you will soon have brilliant flowers.

Plant them outdoors after the last spring frost. Strawflower (*helichrysum*) seeds can be started indoors or you can sow them directly into the garden when frost danger is past. Because these flowers are annuals, they must be replanted each year.

Although there are many flowers suitable for drying, strawflowers are the most colorful of all. Native to Australia, they appear in red, salmon, purple, yellow, pink, rose, and white.

When planting them, choose a sunny location with any type soil as long as it is dry. Because the plants grow to about two feet, be sure to give them protection from wind and heavy rain. You may have to tie them as you would any other tall, slender plant.

All types of floral arrangements using assorted dried materials such as herbs and decorative grasses are enhanced by the natural beauty of brightly colored strawflowers.

Finding Money For Home Improvements

Finding money for those home improvement projects isn't always as easy as homeowners might like. High interest rates and tight money have limited conventional financing, but there are other ways.

If you're considering a small project, you may have the tools to finance it right at your fingertips, according to the National Home Improvement Council (NHIC).

In each of these cases, the homeowner is utilizing credit he or she already has established.

"There are four methods of financing limited-cost projects," explains NHIC Executive Vice President

John Hammon, "passbook loans, credit union loans and bank card loans."

In the case of the passbook loan, you can borrow up to 95 percent of the amount you have in your savings, at rates slightly above what your money is earning. Although you must leave your money in your account, it will continue to earn interest, further lowering your loan cost.

Borrowing money against your life insurance policy is done in a similar fashion. You may borrow up to 95 percent of the cash value of the policy. However, it should be noted that while the loan is outstanding, the face value of your policy is reduced by that amount.

Credit unions, just like other lending institutions, are tightening their lending policies, but they are still making loans. Check with them for either conventional lending or passbook arrangement.

The rates are high on bank card loans, but if you need to borrow for a short time only, they can be quite beneficial. For current rates, check with the bank which issues your card.

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Keeping A Good Tool Box Important

The do-it yourselfer whose tool collection is growing should take a tip from the professional tradesman whose pride of ownership dictates a good tool box as the proper storage place for valuable hand tools.

And, according to the Hand Tools Institute (HTI), the association of American and Canadian manufacturers of quality hand tools, safety is important - even with tool boxes.

First of all, a tool box is meant to hold tools, not to be stood upon or used as an anvil or saw horse.

Strong, heavy-duty tool boxes are made out of steel and can be classified into three types: hand boxes, chests and cabinets.

Cabinets are usually owned by professionals and are mounted on casters, while the smaller tool boxes are designed to be hand carried.

The portable type of tool box may have up to five drawers, a lift-out tray that automatically opens out when the cover is lifted.

All seams should be welded and smooth with no protruding edges to catch clothing or hands.

In addition to the handle on top of the tool box cover, look for handles at each end for those boxes designed to hold an extra heavy load of tools.

A good tool box will have a catch or clasp at each end and should be able to be locked with either a padlock or its own built-in lock.

Tool chests are usually heavier and stronger and have a much greater capacity than tool boxes. The drawers - as many as ten or even more - on the better models can be secured with their own built-in locks.

Some have a tote tray that can be removed for carrying only those tools needed for a particular job.

As with any tool, there are do's and don'ts as well as helpful hints, regarding the safe and most efficient use of tool boxes and chests:

Lightly oil all moving parts such as drawers, trays and hinges at regular intervals.

Use graphite, not oil, on locks and padlocks.

Touch up all rusted spots, paying particular attention to the bottom of tool boxes.

Line the bottom of drawers or trays with felt or scrap carpeting to protect the tools. This applies especially to drawers holding tools with sharp or cutting edges.

Check the handle: is it firmly attached to the tool box?

Sand or file down any sharp edges that may damage clothes or fingers. Sharp edges or corners usually are caused by dropping the tool box to the floor, instead of placing it down.

Wipe all the grease and moisture from tools before storing them in the tool box or chest.

Finally, so it doesn't turn into a Pandora's Box, always replace your tools in the tray or drawer from which they were removed. This system will save time when looking for a particular tool.

Inflation-Fighting

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Plugging Cracks Requires Little Skill

Most of us, when we're buttoning up the house focus our attention on the big projects: insulation, placement of storm windows and doors, and improvements to the heating system.

These are important tasks, but attention to smaller details can also yield firm results. One of the key ones in this area is to plug as many cracks and gaps in the covering of the house as possible. Such work requires no special skills and can be accomplished with inexpensive materials.

Electrical outlets are a major conduit of cold air. These outlets account for up to 20 percent of infiltration in an average house. Even when the walls are insulated there are still channels for the wires.

Fortunately, the solution is both easy and inexpensive. Foam gaskets, shaped for both on-off switches and plug-in receptacles, are readily available. Simply unscrew the cover plates for all such outlets on outside walls, put the foam gaskets in place, and replace the covers. For the optional finishing touch, you might add childproof plugs.

Other wall openings often exist where holes bigger than the diameter of specific pipes have been drilled through outside walls. Often they are disguised by covers on outside walls which don't fit tightly. If visible, stuff the gaps with oakum or bits of fiberglass, and then seal with a caulking gun and good quality caulk.

There are many types of caulk on the market and you should try to find the most fitting one for your home. For example, butyl caulk is especially good for homes with aluminum siding. On the exterior walls of the house, caulk around all pipe covers and where the chimney meets the siding. You will need paint thinner to clean up any excess butyl.

Another big heat loser is the foundation-sill interface. This area is often difficult to see, especially when the basement is finished. Gaps here, however, can be

responsible for a significant amount of infiltration.

If your basement is unfinished, caulk the area where the first wooden piece meets the concrete, stone or block foundation. Fiberglass can be cut to fit over these areas. It is also a good place to use up extra fiberglass from other projects. If the basement is finished, then caulking must be done from the outside.

Be warned though, that gypsy moth caterpillars may have gotten into this area first. Brush these and other insects away from the underside of the siding and then proceed to caulk. Polymeric foam caulking in cans is very good for this type of job.

Finally, check for cracks and gaps around windows and doors. Caulk around all frames and also where a fixed storm door or window has been installed. In this instance, colored caulk to match the paint work or clear caulk may be used. It is a good idea to caulk the inside of storm windows at the bottom. However, be sure to leave the so-called "weep holes" (small openings) free so moisture can drain out.

Periodically, check the condition of your various caulking jobs and replace with new caulking when necessary.

It may be time-consuming, but sealing cracks and gaps in your house is well worth the effort. The minimum cost is quickly paid back. If a top quality caulk is used, it shouldn't have to be replaced for 10 to 20 years. Anyway you look at it, it's a real cost effective measure in these days of expensive energy.

This energy conservation message was written by a certified Mass-Save Energy Auditor. Mass-Save is pleased to offer this energy tip as part of its ongoing non-profit, utility sponsored, energy conservation program. To request a low cost home energy audit or other energy conservation information call, Mass-Save toll-free at 1-800-632-8300.



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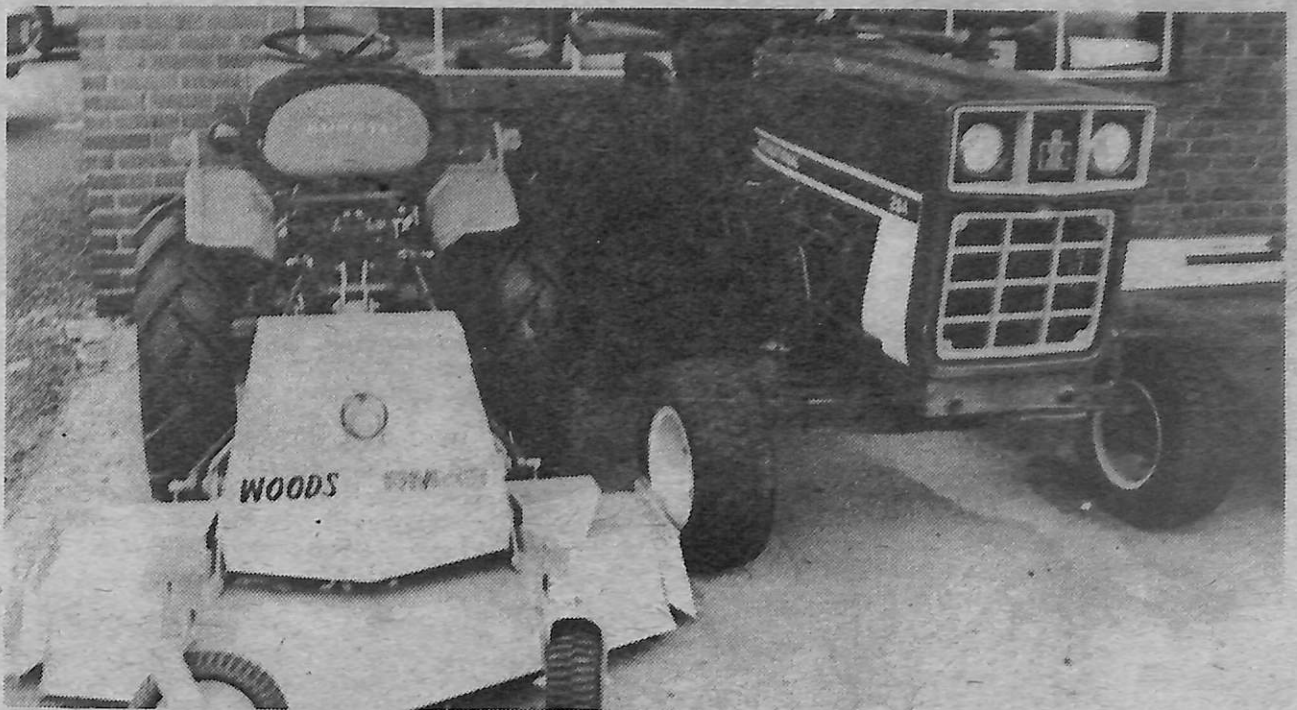
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RIDER MOWERS ARE FOUND IN ABUNDANCE AT CHRISCOLA FARM EQUIPMENT AS THE Spring comes. But hurry over now. Chriscola is offering several models of rider mowers at good prices and with special deals (SEE AD ON THIS PAGE) that will surely please both you and your lawn. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

Some Easy Tips On Planting A Garden

It is a joy to grow and reap a continuous harvest of fresh garden vegetables. Even the city dweller with limited space can successfully grow vegetables.

Tubs, cans, bushel baskets and planters of all sizes and shapes make ideal "small-space" gardens.

Successful gardening is not complicated. Vegetables

need four things - water, soil that retains air once the water is drained, nutrients, and freedom from damaging insects and diseases.

Prepare soil

Before planting, soil should be prepared by mixing organic materials such as compost or manure. This will open up fine textured soil, improve drainage and allow air to move freely through the soil. A good nutrient should be added to provide food for your seedlings.

To be sure of a continuous harvest of vegetables throughout the growing season, successive planting of small quantities is the best method.

Lettuce for example, can be planted in March, another planting can be made in April and another in May. Remember, make the second seed planting before you harvest the first.

The garden area can be divided into three different sections for successive planting. The city dweller can adapt this method by using three different containers.

The first planting should be early cool weather crops such as beets, carrots, spinach, lettuce, radishes, turnips, cabbage and early potatoes.

The second section can be planted with the same vegetables one month later.

The third section should be planted with vegetables that mature in the fall and thrive when planted after the hottest days of summer. Best bets are turnips, lettuce, spinach, radishes, chard, kale, mustard and Chinese cabbage.

Warm-season crops such as cucumbers, melons, summer squash, tomatoes, corn, pole beans and peppers grow beautifully after the soil has been thoroughly warmed by the sun. These vegetables can be planted in your remaining garden space.

To be sure of a continuous supply of vegetables, four factors will determine your planting time: when the soil is workable in the spring; the date of the last spring frost; the date of the first fall frost; and when the soil becomes frozen.

Note the number of days it takes for your vegetables to grow to harvest and you'll know what to plant, when to harvest and when to replant.

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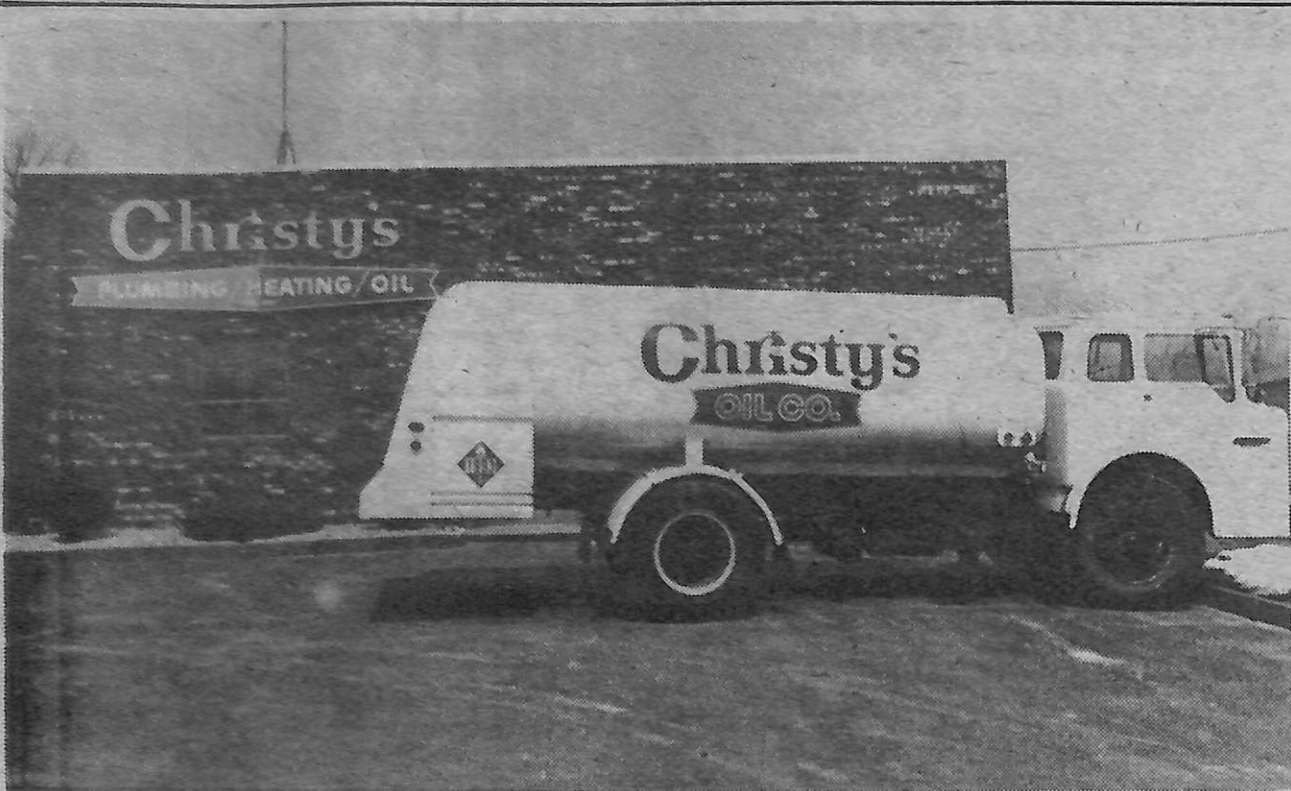
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Plumbing & Heating The Business Of George Christy

By Dorine Kubik

Christy's Plumbing, Heating, and Fuel Oil Company, located at 54 Ramah Circle North in Agawam, offers prompt, courteous service to all its customers on a one-to-one basis.

Christy's is owned and operated by George Christy, who has been an Agawam resident since 1968. He and his wife Marlene live on Willowbrook Drive along with their two daughters, Kimberly, 10, and Tegan, 7.

Christy began his plumbing and heating business in 1974 and added fuel oil service in 1977. He now offers full service for plumbing, heating, and fuel oil to small commercial buildings, industrial complexes, and homes, as well as the repair or remodeling of residential dwellings.

Customer credit and budget accounts are one of Christy's methods of dealing with its customers on a one-to-one basis. They also offer automatic oil deliveries, service contracts on oil burners, and 24-hour burner service. All plumbing and heating needs are handled efficiently and at reasonable prices within the greater Springfield area.

According to Christy, heating with oil can be more efficient than with other types of fuel as long as individuals keep their burners in top condition, insulate and re-insulate, and use good storm doors and windows.

A spokesman from the New England Fuel Institute stated at a meeting recently that 88,000 people in Massachusetts switched from oil to other means of heating their homes in the last two years. Part of the reason for the switch was attributed to the rise in oil prices since 1978, although prices have dropped 11% in the last three months.

According to Christy, those individuals who switch are going to find that the future holds oil still to be the most efficient fuel to use and that prices of other types of fuel will rise.

CHRISTY'S PLUMBING AND HEATING, located at 54 Ramah Circle North in Agawam, is owned and operated by local resident George Christy of Willowbrook Drive. George has been serving the Agawam area since 1974. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

Pesticide Info Center To Be Established By Commonwealth

A new Pesticide Information Center will be established by the Pesticide Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture, it was announced today by Commissioner Frederic Winthrop, Jr.

Increased public concern about issues such as gypsy moth infestation, mosquito control, and the use of herbicides on rights-of-way has prompted the new service, said Winthrop.

Providing up-to-date factual information on all aspects of pesticides has been a priority since the bureau was formed, but the new center will also develop expanded programs and informative bulletins. In addition, the center will maintain a resource library, open to the public by appointment, and step up its release of information to industry, other government agencies, as well as the public and the press.

In the near future, the bureau intends to release an advisory statement on gypsy moth control, and also a homeowner's guide to the safe and proper use of pesticides.

The Pesticides Bureau is responsible for carrying out a comprehensive pesticide regulatory program concerning all aspects of the use, distribution, storage and disposal of pesticides in the Commonwealth.

Major functions of the bureau include enforcement, registration, licensing and providing technical information to other agencies and industry as well as the general public.

In the last year, the bureau has issued approximately 70 administrative orders citing pesticide users for violations and requiring compliance. The bureau also referred ten cases to the Attorney General's Office for the issuance of civil complaints concerning the use of pesticides; so far five of these cases have been settled.

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Eclectic Style Of Decor Attracting Attention

The eclectic style in decorating today is attracting much attention. The reasons are easily found in viewing this room. You can mix old and new, florals and stripes, geometrics and textures—virtually anything, to create a beautiful and luxurious room.

With the help of wallcoverings, you can modernize any room in a style exclusively its own, easily and at low cost.

This livingroom is done in companion wallcoverings of contemporary design which are repeated on the furniture and windows. The floral design mixes well with the light-toned, textured wallcovering found on the ceiling and imaginatively placed on the screen.

Continuity in design provides the balance and harmony that tie together old and new styles, beautifully.

Notice the traditionally styled sofa, upholstered in the floral wallcovering's companion fabric. Quite simply, the room achieves a look of coordination and style. By draping the companion fabric above the window, the floral theme of the room is continued, while adding an innovative, yet casual appeal.

Utilizing companion wallcoverings and fabrics in this way helps you to express your imagination and creativity, easily.

When decorating with an eclectic theme, you open up a limitless number of possibilities. Note the use of a geometric pattern found on the two wing-back chairs. Surprisingly, these contrasting (and formerly referred to as clashing) designs prove to be extremely effective for the overall theme.

With the varying designs, moods and time-elements found in this living room, we achieve the eclectic. The room reflects a sense of intimacy, warmth and innovation. So—put your dream in action and look to wallcoverings for help. They do so much for a room while doing little to your pocketbook.



THE ECLECTIC STYLE in decorating today is attracting much attention. With the help of wall coverings, this living area has been transformed into a postcard-perfect setting by blending old and new styles together in harmony.

Basil Must Be Planted Each Year

Basil, an annual herb, that must be replanted each year, is a fun plant. Try growing about six plants of basil in the spring. A sunny location in either your vegetable garden or your flower garden will do. Most garden stands that sell tomato plants will sell its companion plant, basil, in either of its two varieties: green or purple.

As an herb, the leaves are great in tomato sauces, and you can freeze them for winter use. Basil leaves can be dried and stored in airtight containers or they can be immersed in olive oil and kept for many months.

For the fun part - try letting the basil plants go to seed. Do not pinch the plants back. Spikes with tiny

white flowers will form on the green variety and tiny lavender flowers will form on the purple variety. After the first frost hits, the spikes will turn to a rich, dark brown.

If you remove the spikes and hang them upside down in a dry, airy area for a few days to dry, you will have a natural herbal room freshener that will last for many months. A musty cellar will be transformed by the warm, spicy scent of the basil when you hang a bunch in a corner from a beam.

Add dried basil to a basket of straw flowers with a calico ribbon and suddenly a combination dried arrangement and room freshener exists. It's great for gifts and inexpensive, too.

How To Water Lawn Common Question

There are probably more questions about watering than any other aspect of lawn care, and none are harder to answer.

The problem is that lawn watering needs depend on many varieties - the type of climate, the type of soil, wind velocity, humidity, and the frequency of rain, among other things.

However, there are some guidelines for those who take lawn-watering seriously and don't just assign it as a chore to a reluctant offspring.

How Often To Water

A lawn has to be watered when the soil begins to dry out, before the grass actually wilts. One sign is that areas of the lawn will begin to change color, picking up a blue-green or smoky tinge.

Another is a loss of resilience. If footprints make a lasting imprint in the lawn instead of bouncing back, it's time to water.

Soil conditions affect how often you need to water. A foot of loam soil will hold about an inch and a half of water. Sandy soil will hold about half that amount, and a clay soil twice as much.

How Much To Water

The weather is important. More frequent watering is required when it's hot and windy. However, when there is ample summer rain, only supplementary watering may be needed.

Ideally, the roots of grass should grow deep, so the soil should be moistened six to eight inches deep. This should take between one and two inches of water over the lawn surface. The average lawn will use up this amount of water in about a week.

One way to check if the water has gone down six to eight inches is to wait 12 hours and then simply poke a screwdriver into the ground. If it penetrates that distance without much resistance, the lawn is probably wet enough.

Water should be applied as uniformly as possible, and no faster than the soil can absorb it. Dividing watering into timed intervals may be helpful.

Sprinkle until the soil can't take any more water and then stop and give the lawn about 30 minutes to absorb the water. Then resume the watering until the desired amount has been applied.

When To Water

Early morning is an ideal time to water. There are several drawbacks to afternoon watering. For one thing, evaporation caused by wind and sun are at a maximum in the afternoon.

In addition, local water consumption is usually highest in the afternoon, causing low water pressure and interfering with sprinkling patterns.

Certain areas of the lawn may need to be watered before others, such as an area on a slope facing south with maximum sun. Hand-watering isolated dry areas can sometimes extend waterings for a few days.

Two problems that result in poor water penetration are thatch and compacted soil, which actually can repel water and cause wasteful runoff.

Regular dethatching and aerification should be practiced to increase water penetration, provide air to roots, and aid in nutrient uptake.

Mowing lawns at recommended heights, which are higher in hot weather will also help conserve water.

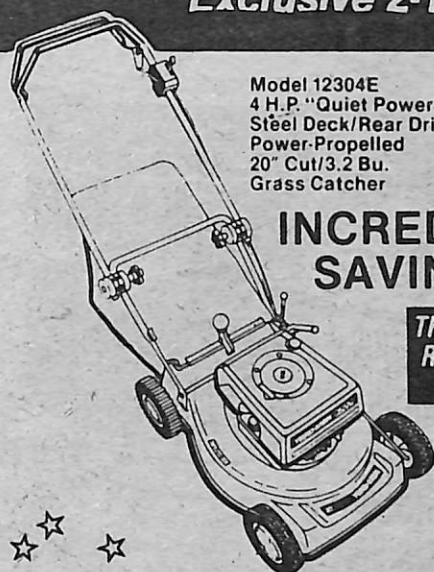
Efficient watering also depends on proper fertilization. Poor fertilization encourages weeds which compete with the grass for water.

Too much fertilizer can make the lawn hungrier for water, and in turn, cause thatch to develop.

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Trees Important To People Ready To Buy New Home

Next time you're in the market to buy a house, when you check the roof, the paint, the drains and the furnace, also take a critical look at the trees. Trees can help save fuel, cool the house, absorb noise and provide privacy. Make sure they're not going to fall down tomorrow.

According to Francis Holmes of the UMass Cooperative Extension Service, there are several things a potential homeowner can do to check the health of the trees in the yard.

Look at the base of the tree, where it meets the ground. Does the trunk flare out, or does it go straight into the ground like a utility pole? The flare shows normal depth. Holmes, director of the Shade Trees Laboratories, says that the straight-pole effect shows that "fill" was put over the roots to make a level lawn. This smothers the roots and can kill the tree.

Also glance at the top of the tree. Dead twigs and branches usually indicate root injuries or root diseases. Large numbers of dead twigs and branches may mean that routine care, such as pruning, has been neglected for years.

A tree's roots can grow out several hundred feet from the trunk. Examine the trunk for a large number of new scars. A new scar has no roll of callus growth along its margins. Multiple scars may mean that heavy equipment ran over the root system, shearing and crushing thousands of tiny rootlets which pick up water. During the next few years, the tree is likely to decline seriously.

Look to see how near a newly-built house the large trees are growing. The closer the tree, the more of its root system was cut off when the foundation and cellar were dug. The loss of many roots may mean decline, dieback, and death.

Also check for any signs of recent trenching. Find any metal covers, pipes or meters in the lawn. Ask where the underground gas, electricity and telephone services come in and ask to see exactly where the septic tank, if any, is located. Roots may have been cut along those lines. Check for large areas of new pavement over part of the root system. Roots smother if cut off from air by the pavement.

Constructions such as wire, chain, or a fence embedded in the trunk can strangle the tree. Look also for many new, large pruning scars on the trunk and larger branches. The branches may have been cut because they were dead, and you should find out why they died.

When water backs up into soil that once was well aerated, then the drainage has probably been changed. Look for standing water in the grass near the tree. If the water remains, then the roots will "drown" and the treetop will begin to die of "thirst" because the dead roots no longer deliver water to the trunk.

Finally, Holmes recommends paying a modest fee for a professional examination by a locally established arborist. Since the trees and shrubs make up about 15 percent of the value of the house and property, they deserve an appraisal. Ask for a written estimate, including all care the trees seem to need.

Buying a home is a major investment. Take the time and care to make the final decision the right one.

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Twin Oaks Farms Opens On Mill St.



NOW OPEN ON MILL STREET IN FEEDING HILLS (just across from Kensington Street) is Twin Oaks Farms, which will be offering everything from seeds to hanging plants to fruits and vegetables once that season arrives. Here, John Spinetti, one of the two co-owners of Twin Oaks Farms, attends to several of his plants in the green house directly behind the stand, which is scheduled to be open year-round. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

Protecting Bees From Pesticides

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture today announced its intent to file an emergency regulation which will severely limit the use of an insecticide implicated as a threat to honey bee populations in Massachusetts.

The application of microencapsulated methyl parathion to commercial crops has caused significant bee kills, according to the Massachusetts Federation of Beekeepers, who initiated the review leading to this action by the Department's Pesticide Bureau.

The regulation when promulgated will allow only those uses of the insecticide which have been determined to be necessary to agriculture and only under conditions which will not endanger bee populations.

The emergency regulation will be in effect for three months, within which time a hearing will be held to formulate a permanent regulation.

Permits will be required both to purchase and to use the insecticide product. The only uses to be permitted will be for the control of first generation European Corn Borer and the San Jose Scale in apple orchards. A con-

dition of use will be that any flowering plants in the field or orchard and around their perimeters must be controlled by mowing or other means.

The issuance of permits will be based on information gathered during an on-site visit by appropriate Department personnel or other qualified personnel designated by the Department. The visit will determine the need for the permit and the absence of flowering plants in or adjacent to the field or orchard.

The Department will emphasize the investigation of bee kills in areas where microencapsulated parathion is in use or has been used during the season of the bee kill.

There are threats to bees from pesticide uses other than the product of immediate concern, however, and thus the Food and Agriculture Department will establish a Task Force to Study Bee/Pesticide Problems. It is hoped that this group will help resolve the sometimes competing interests of beekeepers and pesticide users.

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Fine Display At CABINET SHOWCASE



THE CABINET SHOWCASE on 442 Westfield Street in West Springfield, opened its doors last summer and since that time, has grown into one of the areas most dependable stores of offering custom cabinetry. This lovely display is enough to make anyone proud of their kitchen. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

Plants By Bob Cecchi



ANOTHER PRETTY FACE? Well, it's none other than Bob Cecchi, owner and operator of E. CECCHI FARMS in Feeding Hills. Here, Bob holds one of his fine plants that would brighten any home or office. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

What Foundations Best Serve Your Plants

By Fran Warga
Agawam Garden Club

Foundation landscaping consists of the groupings of plants along the base of the house or other buildings in such a manner as to soften the foundation line and tie in the house to the rest of the landscape. The plants should be chosen to go well with the house and be in harmony with each other.

Evergreens, both the needle types and broad-leaved, should form the backbone of all foundation plantings. With today's emphasis on the informal, low-growing, deciduous shrubs such as potentilla, cotoneaster, Japanese barberry, or winged euonymus can be in-

terplanted with the evergreens. Most important, however, is to select plants that have a natural appearance, good green coloring, and are fairly compact in growth habit.

The person who does the landscaping needs to have not only an artistic sense of composition, but a sound knowledge of the plants and their growing requirements to guide him in their arrangements along the foundation. He should know, for instance, that low-growing plants are not merely immature specimens of taller varieties and belong beneath windows where they will not block out light.

The taller varieties should only be used against blank walls to screen out undesirable features and to accent corners.

If the house has a monotonous, long unbroken roofline, the landscaper should know that a low-growing ornamental tree, such as flowering dogwood or crab, planted fairly close to the house will relieve

that monotony. He should also know that tall growing trees should be planted at some distance from the house so the branches frame rather than screen the house.

The high, ugly masonry foundations that are frequently found both in older homes and the split-levels or raised ranches present a problem not only to the amateur, but often to the professional landscaper. Instead of simply screening the objectional walls with tall shrubbery, he should draw attention to them by dramatizing them.

Vines like baltic ivy or wisteria can be trained to climb the walls to provide interesting textural contrasts. Fruit trees espaliered against the walls are most attractive when in flower and later in fruit. They are especially dramatic in winter when the branches cast patterns of light and shadow onto the surface.

The landscaper should also be able to visualize how the planting will look in ten years and plan accordingly by leaving sufficient space between the plants. While intelligent pruning may be used to restrain the growth of some of the plants, there are others which do not respond to pruning and need ample space to develop.

Also, one should locate the plants at least three feet from the foundation walls, bringing them out from the roof's overhang. Such spacing allows access for the maintenance of both plants and house.

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A Lazy Gardener's Dream

By George Galvin
Agawam Library Staff

With the springtime comes a natural desire to seek the refreshment of the outdoors. This desire is manifested through a variety of outdoor sports and hobbies such as tennis, baseball, bicycling and kite-flying.

However, some not-so-pleasant and usually neglected chores also arrive with the spring. Some of these are the dreaded window-washing, lawn-mowing and, for those of us with purple thumbs, gardening.

Almost everyone enjoys a beautiful garden, but not everyone enjoys the work - the digging, planting, watering, fertilizing, weeding, mowing, mulching, raking, pruning, clipping, not to mention cleaning up debris, putting the tools away, and washing off the mud. As a matter of fact, a lot of gardeners would just as soon spend part of this time playing golf or fishing or relaxing in the shade reading a book. Of course, as we all know, this is merely a form of procrastination and eventually we will simply feel guilty because we've allowed our property to go completely wild and because our neighbors are casting wary glances over the fence at our uncut lawns and weedy flower beds.

Gardening, of course, can be as time consuming as we make it. Many people find it a source of deep satisfaction, as well as a form of light exercise. To those, however, who find chopping brambles and pulling weeds a grim, unending war, Donald Wyman has written a book entitled **Easy Gardens**, which may remove some of the grisly pains of gardening. Wyman advocates a practical, realistic, "low maintenance" approach to gardening. This involves "weighing" the effect desired against the effort required, trade-offs between the perfect and the practical, and a willingness to compromise.

No Easy Solution

"There is no easy solution to low maintenance," concedes Wyman. "It is all a matter of balance; the goal is to achieve the highest level of interest with the least maintenance throughout the growing season." Therefore, the gardener should focus only upon the kind of plants and the kinds of gardening work he enjoys, because the most successful garden is no longer the one planted to dress up a house or impress the neighbors. Rather, it is one designed to provide the greatest possible pleasure for the gardener. "Planning, then, must start with self-examination," says Wyman, "plus consultation with any family members who will be involved in enjoying the garden and in keeping it up. With ideas compared and a goal defined, a gardener can consider the three elements - plants, design and labor-saving techniques - that will bring the goal within reach."

Wyman then devotes an instructional chapter to each of the three elements: choosing plants that care for themselves, planning ahead to save falling behind - which includes a picture essay entitled "structures that please the eye and ease the job" - and working to lighten the work load. He also includes an encyclopedia of easy-care plants, climate notes for the easy garden, and a guide to 153 low-maintenance plants.

Along with this source, the library also has a variety of other books that present a simplified and pleasurable approach to gardening. Some of these



BARBARA O'CONNOR, owner and operator of the **CARPET SHED** at 1496 Main Street, Agawam (just before Riverside Park, or just after Riverside Park if you are coming in from Suffield), is well-known for her pretty smile and professional service. Carpet Shed's motto is "The Personal Touch At Discount Prices" and that's a combination that's tough to beat. Advertiser/News photo by Jack Devine.

books are **Gardening For People** (who think they don't know how) by Douglas Moon; **The Minimum Maintenance Gardening Handbook** by Walter F. Bruning; **Taking The Ache Out Of Gardening** by Stuart Dudley; and **Clear And Simple Gardening** by D. X. Fenten.

The library also subscribes to several agriculturally oriented magazines such as **Organic Gardening**, **Better Homes And Gardens**, **Country Journal**, **Flower And Garden**, **House and Garden** and **Mother Earth News** to name a few. Each of these periodicals deals with a broad range of topics, gardening included. They have discussed everything from "Gardening for Beginners" to "Outdoor Gardening in Pots and Boxes."

So maybe after having read a few of these excellent sources, some of us purple thumbs may graduate to green thumbs and actually discover that we not only enjoy gardening, but have a natural flair for it. However, if you're still not convinced, then you must be one of those people who would rather invest in a machete in order to keep your jungle at bay. If this is the case, give up, because you're beyond hope.

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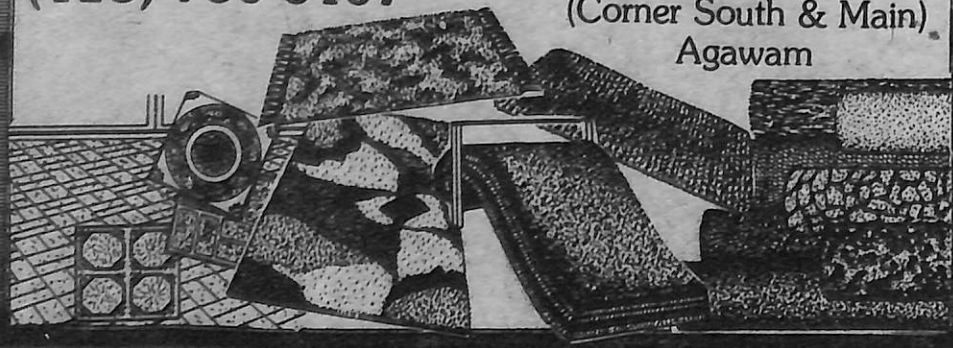
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Flowers Enjoy Long History Of Distinction

By Jeanne Hofmann

Plants, like people, have personalities. Most gardeners cultivate likes and dislikes for certain flowers as sincerely as they do their relationships with humans. Plants have histories, too. Researching that subject can enhance the waiting time between seed and blossom, and might even turn weeding from a chore into a pleasantly philosophical pastime.

Consider the sunflower - court emblem of Louis XIV and favorite of the painter Van Gogh, who often decorated his bedroom with giant bunches of them. He once wanted to fill his studio walls with only paintings of them. To Van Gogh, they were symbols of the sun, the color of light, happiness and eternal renewal.

In ancient Greece, the iris was named after the goddess of rainbows. In 1950 B.C. an Egyptian pharaoh brought some back from Syria as spoils of war. Since these flowers were considered essential to love potions, they were given to physicians and sorcerers, rather than grown for their beauty. They were used to treat a variety of health complaints, too - such as ague, shivering, headache, falling teeth, and snakebites. In

Japan, iris can still be found growing on the roofs of houses. This is due to a tradition that the Japanese were once forbidden to grow in their garden any plants not ordered by the Emperor. Since iris roots were a vital ingredient of facepowder, Japanese women got around the edict by cultivating iris on their roofs!

The Mystique Of Roses

Books have been written on the history and mystique of roses. One Grecian legend of the origin of the rose is that it sprang from Venus' blushes when she was observed bathing by Jupiter. The Roman emperor Nero perfumed his banquets with them. Caligula walked to bed each night on a carpet of red ones. Writers and artists in every century have used them for inspiration. For perfume and beauty, the rose is unique in appeal and the sages all seem to agree with Shakespeare's Juliet that "...a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

Unknown to the west before the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the tulip takes its name from the Turkish

word "dulband," a turban which the full petaled one closely resembles. Unlike the rose, the tulip has seldom been the inspiration of poets. In fact, some writers and botanists have been downright prejudiced against them. Thomas Fuller (circa 1550) said, "The tulip is no more than a well-complexioned stink."

Perhaps it seemed too coldly perfect to arouse his fiery passions, but to the New Englander, yearning for the promise and renewal of spring, the tulip is as welcome to the soul as the first robin's song.

Shakespeare mentions violets in his plays no less than fifteen times, and they were the favored flowers of the ancient Greeks. One of Albrecht Durer's most beautiful watercolors is a simple bunch of violets. As medicine, they were prescribed in Chaucer's time for headaches and insomnia, thusly...

"Seethe the violets in water and soak well your feet to the ankles. At bedtime, bind this herb to the temples and sleep well, by the grace of God." Recipes using violets have been popular through history. In the east, they were used in sherbets and in salads, scattered on lettuce with sliced onions. A favorite dessert of Queen Elizabeth I was "Mon Amy," a pudding which was covered with violets just before serving.

First cousin to violets, the mischievous faced pansies have been beloved for their charm through the centuries. Nicknames abound: "Call-me-to-you," "Kit-fun-in-the-streets," and "Pink-of-my-John" to name a few. "Heartsease" was the most popular nickname and can be traced to the Elizabethan belief that the juice of pansies "...on sleeping eyelids laid will make a man or woman madly dote on the next live creature that it sees."

Whatever your favorite flower, there is probably a story about it to enhance your pleasure in its beauty. Maybe you will enjoy your garden even more this year if you dig into its history as well as its topsoil.

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